

Mexico-United States Emergency Management Council to manage the movement of goods and people, including emergency responders, across our shared borders during and following an emergency, and to improve communications among governments and between governments and industry, particularly during times of increased threat.

THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP OF NORTH AMERICA: KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE MARCH 2006

Strengthening the Competitiveness of North America

- To lower costs for business, maximize trade and protect health, safety and the environment, our governments completed a trilateral **Regulatory Cooperation Framework**. The framework promotes information sharing among regulators and greater compatibility of regulations and regulatory processes.
- To enhance our common efforts to protect intellectual property rights, the three governments finalized an **Action Strategy to combat trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy**.
- To strengthen our energy security, environmental protection and economic sustainability, our governments finalized a **Trilateral Agreement for Cooperation in Energy Science and Technology**.
- To increase trade among our three countries, our governments implemented changes to the **NAFTA rules of origin** by mid-2006 that covered approximately \$30 billion in annual trilateral trade. An additional set of changes, agreed to in 2007, will reduce export-related transaction costs for approximately \$100 billion in annual trilateral trade.
- To promote safety and the seamless flow of goods across our border, Canada and the United States have agreed to the **reciprocal recognition of containers** used for the transportation of dangerous goods.
- To enhance the introduction of new wireless services and technologies, Canada and the United States have **implemented a new process to expedite radio spectrum sharing arrangements for the border regions**. This ensures citizens have timely access to the latest wireless services, and public safety and national security authorities have the spectrum they need, when they need it.
- To **improve the compatibility and reliability of critically important wireless communications for public safety/first responders**, Mexico and the United States signed a protocol in August facilitating cross border communications.
- To **facilitate the trade of telecommunications equipment**, Canada and the United States recognized each other's testing and certification for telecommunications equipment. Mexico will have a process in place by the end of 2007 to mutually accept test reports from the US and Canada. This reduces production costs and shortens the time to bring new products to market.
- To modernize aviation relations and provide airlines with added flexibility to offer better choices and services, the United States and Canada signed and implemented the text of a **comprehensive Open-Skies air transport agreement** on March 12, 2007.
- To **increase border crossing efficiency** at the port of entry, the United States and Mexico announced synchronized, extended hours of operation at the Santa Teresa/San Jeronimo Port of Entry starting September 2007.
- As part of the North American Steel Strategy, North American governments launched a trilateral, publicly-available **North American Steel Trade Monitor website** presenting North American steel trade data on a consolidated basis.
- Mexico and the United States established a **bilateral Border Facilitation**

Working Group to advance in the areas of infrastructure, technology, coordination, and stakeholder outreach and engagement while ensuring high levels of security at our points of entry.

Improving the Safety and Security of our Citizens

- To better detect nuclear and radiological material at ports, the Mexican government has agreed to install **advanced radiological detection technology** at the ports of Lazaro Cardenas, Altamira, Manzanillo and Veracruz. About 92 percent of Mexico's maritime cargo passes through these ports.
- To improve surveillance at ports, Canada has completed the **installation of radiation detection equipment** in Montreal, Halifax and Deltaport in Vancouver which, when fully operational, will screen 100 percent of inbound containers.
- To **improve the security and predictability of travel documents**, Canada and the United States approved the *Recommended Standards for Secure Proof of Status and Nationality*.
- To **enhance and strengthen cargo security programs**, Canada and the United States [States] * initiated a five-year program to harmonize automated commercial information systems.

Protecting our Environment, Health and Quality of Life

- To detect, contain and control an avian influenza outbreak, and to mitigate the impacts of a possible human influenza pandemic in North America, our governments have finalized a **North American Plan for Avian and Pandemic Influenza**.
- To promote energy efficiency, our governments have **harmonized energy performance standards for key household appliances and consumer products**, such as freezers, refrigerators and room air conditioners.
- To **raise the health status of indigenous people**, Canada, Mexico and the

United States exchanged information and research on various indigenous health issues, including suicide prevention, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, diabetes and indigenous health systems.

- To benefit our environment and quality of life, Canada and the United States signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) aimed at **improving motor vehicle fuel efficiency**. The MoC will allow the two countries to benefit from each others knowledge and experience in the area of fuel efficiency.
- To protect the environment, enhance health of people and promote the competitiveness of the automotive industry, Mexico started a program to gradually increase, from 2006 to 2009, the **supply of low sulphur fuels** in all the country.
- To improve the **ecological health of our shared marine resources**, our governments continued to expand the North American Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Network. The Network will use our countries' marine protected areas in the development of a tri-national MPA-based monitoring program stretching from Baja to the Bering Strait.
- To **assure the safety of consumers and the security of our food and agriculture systems**, Canada, Mexico and the United States agreed to share current threat and vulnerability assessment methodology and information for the food and agriculture systems, including imported and exported foods of higher concern, then undertake joint threat and vulnerability assessments.
- To better inform our citizens and civil society and receive input on our collaborative efforts under the SPP framework, the governments of Mexico and Canada **hosted seminars with academics and specialists** on the three countries as part of an ongoing public policy consultation process regarding the future of North America.

* White House correction.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Following a Briefing on the Interstate 35W Bridge Damage and Minnesota Floods in Minneapolis, Minnesota

August 21, 2007

I want to thank the Senators, the Congresspersons, the Governor, and the mayor for joining me and Secretary Peters and others in my administration. We're here to talk about two disasters. First we talked about the bridge that collapsed. I was here earlier, saw the collapse firsthand. I was impressed by the magnitude of the problem. It was—my heart was touched by the fact that people lost their lives.

Coming back here, I'm impressed by the spirit of cooperation that is taking place to solve the problem. The Federal Government, the State government, and the local government have worked very closely, on the one hand, to rescue the remains in a compassionate way. I appreciate our military divers who are so skilled—skilled at not only finding the bodies but skilled at helping a loved one deal with grief.

The question now is, how fast can we get the bridge built? Members of the Minnesota senatorial and congressional delegation did really good work at the end of the session, passed authorization for a significant chunk of money that would go to get this bridge up and running.

And so our job now is to cut through the bureaucracy, as best as possible, and get the people down here a new bridge. And that's what we've been discussing. The recovery is not complete, but pretty close to complete. The investigation as to why is ongoing. What the people of Minneapolis want to know is how fast can we get them a new bridge, and can it be modern, and can it accommodate future forms of transportation. I believe the answer to that question is yes. The spirit that caused the recovery to be well coordinated is the very same spirit that's going to cause this bridge to get rebuilt.

The Governor and others have briefed me on the floods in Congressman Walz's district.

These floods come suddenly. People wake up and find their lives turned upside down. Water comes charging through their communities and really kind of wrecks the infrastructure. But what I have found, and the Congressmen and Senators have found the same thing, you can't wreck the spirit of people.

The job of the Federal Government is to get help moving as quickly as possible. I just talked to the Governor, who has processed the final and the necessary paperwork so that a flood of help can come down—Tim—to get these people realizing somebody cares about them.

I understand rural America pretty well. Sometimes people in rural America wonder whether or not the people in the cities think about them. I appreciate you coming to brief me, because I want those folks to understand, the President thinks about it; the senators and the Governor have heard about it, and they care about it. There's help that's available. We'd love to get the small businesses up and running, maybe help to get some shelter down there for people. I'm looking forward to making sure that the right people show up here on the ground. Secretary Peters has been the right person to coordinate this effort for the bridge, and we'll get somebody down here in charge to give the people in your district some hope.

There's no doubt in my mind that when I come back to see the bridge open that these communities will be up and running too, and that State football championship team you were talking about—[laughter]—will be winning games again.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:53 p.m. in the Base Operations—Blue Room at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Air Reserve Station. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota; and Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN. He also referred to Public Law 110–56, approved August 6. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.